

THE SUBURBAN CITIZEN.
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Four years of uninterrupted business prosperity confronts us. Let us all rejoice.

The good people of East Washington Heights have formed a Citizens' Association for the mutual good of the community. We are at their service.

Governor-General Wood, of Cuba, declares that mosquitoes spread yellow fever, their stings carrying the scourge. The mosquito has already been convicted of spreading the germs of malaria. This new indictment calls for some effective method to destroy the whole mosquito family.

The extension of the free delivery of mails to populous rural districts in which the service promised to be distinctly advantageous and feasible has been the most notable recent achievement of the Postoffice Department. Over 2000 routes have been established and nearly 1,500,000 families are served with a daily mail at their doors. Free delivery makes practicable the abolition of many small postoffices, with resultant saving, and at the same time leads to a larger use of the mails for the quick dispatch of parcels as well as of letters and newspapers.

There was little rain during the past summer in the mountain region which supplies the semi-arid district of the far West with water; the snows last winter were very light, and the resulting continued drought made the great forests a ready prey to flames. The mischief thus wrought is incalculable and irremediable, and it can be lessened only by careful and intelligent regulation by law of the privilege of entrance upon public forest reservations. If the wooded glory of the great mountains should be swept away a vast area of now fertile territory would revert to hopeless sterility.

The New Jersey Court of Errors and Appeals recently held in a case upon which judgment was passed that trolley cars and ordinary carriages have equal rights upon public streets and crossings, and that the first to reach the crossing has the right to cross over first. In case, however, it appears that the motorman of the trolley does not intend to respect the carriage driver's right of priority, and that the driver cannot, with the use of reasonable prudence, exercise his right, he is guilty of contributory negligence if he fails to wait or turn aside, if he can do so by the use of due care, and thus protect himself from injury.

THE KISS AT THE DOOR.
In the days of the lance and the spur,
When the hero went forth to the fight,
Off he carried a token from her
Whom he worshiped as lover and knight,
And when fierce surged the battle around,
And when close pressed the merciless foe,
'Twas that token that drove off despair
And gave victory's strength to his blow.
Not a hero of knightly am I,
But a warrior in industry's strife,
Where the lance that I wield is my pen,
And the lady I serve is my wife.
Yet a token I carry each day,
Full as precious as any of yore,
And it stoutsens my heart for the fray—
'Tis my love's morning kiss at the door.

For his faith will the martyr endure,
By the sunset the artist's inspire,
At the blast of the bugle and fife,
Is the soldier to gallantry fired.
But whatever may others exalt,
For myself I shall ask nothing more
As a prompter to worthiest deeds
Than the kiss that I get at the door.
—E. W. Gray, in the Newark Daily Advertiser.

The Ruse That Failed.
By F. F. James.
"NOW, Arthur," said Mrs. Barrington as her husband put three handbags on the seat beside her in the train and handed over her ticket, "I want you to be sure and write to me every day, and tell me everything you think, how much you miss me, and all about the way the servant get along—don't omit any of the details, thinking that I shall not be interested, for every word that you write, dear, will be precious to me. Put plenty of local color in your letters."
"Oh, I'll keep you posted," he replied. "You have a good time, and don't worry about me. I'll get along somehow. Of course, it'll be lonely and all that, but I'll manage to pass the time. It'll be rather dismal for me to sit in the garden alone when it begins to get dark, thinking of you in the gay crowd having a good time, and never giving a thought to—"
"Arthur," his pretty wife interrupted, "if you continue to talk that way, I just shan't go. You know I shall think of you every minute I'm away, and if the doctor hadn't said the sea air would be good for me I wouldn't have thought of accepting Aunt Laura's invitation. Please don't fret me, love, will you? Remember that, wherever I may be, and no matter how gay my surroundings, I shall be thinking of you."
They threw kisses at each other as the train moved away. Then Barrington went to his office and began writing letters. They were to his wife. He wrote fourteen of them—enough to last for two weeks.

In general outline the letters were about the same. He started each by filling a sheet with endearing words and declarations that he was very lonely without his darling. Then followed the local color she wanted, in the form of comments on occurrences of the day in and about their home.

The letters were not dated, but he sealed and addressed them, and arranged them in a pile so that his lady clerk could take off the top one day after day and drop it into the letter-box.

Then he went off with a male companion, determined to have a good time for ten or twelve days.

He had been gone nearly a week when there came a telegram for him.

Of course, telegrams had to be opened, and when Miss Wilbreth, the lady clerk, read the message, she turned pale.

"Why don't you answer my questions about the housemaid's ankle and your liver? Am awfully worried."

That was what Elizabeth Barrington had telegraphed.

After studying the matter for a while, Miss Wilbreth decided that it was necessary for her to act. She was clever enough to hold a position that not more than one man out of fifty could have filled, and she had the habit of keeping her eyes and ears open. Still, she said to herself:

"The housemaid's ankle? I can see how he might know something about his own liver, but—and why should his wife, of all people, want him to see about it? Well, if I ever get married—"

But instead of finishing what she had started to say, she wrote the following dispatch:

"Leg and liver O. K. Don't worry."

It was about ten o'clock the next day when another telegram for Arthur Barrington was received. It read:

"Yesterday's letter contradicts telegram. Why are you deceiving me? Are you better to-day? Shall I come home?"

The lady clerk's reply was as follows:

"Am true as steel. Don't think of coming home."

Miss Wilbreth had just begun to feel that she had succeeded in settling the disagreeable business, when a messenger boy arrived with another telegram, in which her employer's wife said:

"Don't understand. What do you mean by being true as steel? Something tells me you are worse. Wire immediately."

"Never mind reference to steel. Am all right."

Mrs. Barrington watched eagerly for the postman on the following day, and when he handed her Arthur's letter she opened it with trembling fingers. Eagerly she scanned the first page and was about half through the local color when she jumped up and ran to her aunt, crying:

"Merciful goodness! what can this mean? Three days ago Arthur wrote that the housemaid was 'still laid up with her lame ankle,' which I have tried in vain to get him to tell me about, and that he was not feeling well, and the doctor had told him that his liver was out of order. Yet here, into-day's letter, he tells me that the housemaid has just fallen downstairs, spraining her ankle, and that he made himself a Welsh rabbit the night before last, and ate so much of it his liver is all upset. Why on earth did the housemaid fall downstairs when she had a sprained ankle, and what ever possessed Arthur to eat a Welsh rabbit when the doctor had just warned him about his liver?"

Her aunt was trying to work it out, when Elizabeth Barrington happened to think of the telegram she had received the day before.

"This letter must have been written about the time they were sent," she said. "I'm going home. Something's wrong. Arthur's liver trouble has gone to his head! My poor darling has lost his reason! He writes a thing and then denies it by telegraph. By starting to-night I can be with him to-morrow morning. Oh, how shall I pass the weary hours?"

Miss Wilbreth broke down and made a full confession when Mrs. Barrington rushed, wild-eyed and pale, into her husband's office. Then the two women sat together in the private room and wept.

"If I hadn't accidentally knocked over the pile of letters he left to be posted," the lady clerk sobbed, "they would not have been mixed up; there would have been no reference to the spraining of the housemaid's ankle before it happened, and his liver would not have troubled him until after he ate the rabbit. How shall I ever be able to explain it to him?"

"You needn't try," Mrs. Barrington answered; "I'll explain it to him when he comes home. Dear old fellow! I'm so glad he doesn't know anything about this. He mightn't be having a good time at all if he did."—New York Weekly.

COLOR OF AUTUMN LEAVES.
Depends a Good Deal on Storing Up of Ash Constituents.
Why is it that in autumn the leaves of some of the forest trees exhibit a brilliant livery of crimson while others exhibit only a yellow or golden glory? P. Q. Keegan in a recent letter to Nature, offers a tentative hypothesis, as follows. He says:

"It is known by analysis that the percentage of ash increases through nearly the whole life of the leaf in beech, sycamore, elm, but not in oak, larch, cherry, etc. It depends a good deal on whether some one ash constituent (generally lime or silica) is being steadily stored up. The dry leaf of the common maple on May 1 has 6 per cent., and in October 16.2 per cent. ash. The dry leaf of the wild cherry has on April 28 7.8 per cent., and on October 2 7.2 per cent. ash. Now the leaf of the former tree is only yellow in autumn, and never red, while that of the latter is very often beautifully crimson. In the former case there is a kind of gradual decay or death of some of the cells, (mostly of the upper external skin), which occasions a drainage of mineral and organic substances to these parts from the still living tissues, and this drainage seems to have a distinct influence over the ultimate autumnal coloring of the leaf itself. It is easy to understand that the leaves which exhibit such a decay are just those wherein the chromogen precursive of the brilliant red coloration would likewise suffer an analogous kind of change, i. e., it would tend to become brown, to produce phlophene, just as it does in the other bark which is the practically dead portion of the rind."

"Where this accumulation of mineral matter does not take place, as in cherries, currants, American oaks, pears, wild vine, barberry, etc., the chromogen does not deteriorate into a simple yellow or dull brown; it evolves its proper pigment, and assumes the flush and glow of active living color."

A Beautiful Gem.
"Not the least beautiful of the many semi-precious stones, for which there is always a large demand, is the topaz," said a wholesale dealer in gems to the writer. "The name topaz generally suggests only a yellow stone, yet there are light blue, brown and green varieties which are frequently sold as aquamarines. The genuine aquamarine may, however, be easily distinguished from a topaz, as the former stone more closely resembles the color of green sea salt. Besides, the topaz admits of a higher polish, and is extremely slippery to the touch. Strange to say, the yellow topaz when slightly heated becomes pink; heated further, the pink grows paler, and by long heating it is entirely expelled, leaving the green colorless. The sherry-colored or brown topaz is bleached in a very short time by the rays of the sun or strong daylight, and all the white topazes found in nature have been colorized in this way. The topaz is found in granite rocks in Siberia, Japan, Peru, Ceylon, Brazil and Maine, and in volcanic rocks in Colorado, Utah and New Mexico."—Washington Star.

The Bishop and the Hairpins.
The Bishop of Liverpool has issued a new code of rules for confirmation. He desires that girls should refrain from the use of long pins in the hair, as the presence of such pins frequently results in the Bishop's fingers being lacerated during the "laying on of hands."—Christian World.

ALLIGATOR KNOWS ITS NAME.
"Dick" Lives in a Swamp and is the Pride of Ruddock.
There have been trained elephants, trained snakes, and many other "intelligent" animals, but it remained for Ruddock, La., to offer to the world a trained alligator. F. M. Worrall, a well known lumber man of St. Louis, who was recently at Ruddock, told an interesting story about the wonderful carnivorous reptile which has its home within thirty miles of the city.

"Paris boasts of her Exposition," said Mr. Worrall, "but all of the pride of Ruddock is aroused over an alligator which actually answers to the name of Dick. As soon as I alighted from the train at Ruddock I was aware that I was in the land of the alligator. In a pond near the depot there is one about eight feet long. I was admiring it when a citizen came up to me and said:

"Ever see the trained alligator?"

"No," said I, somewhat amused. I was then invited to go and see him. He is in the swamp, a few miles from Ruddock, and is well known to every man, woman and child in the whole parish. We went down into the swamp on a log train. When we reached the heart of the swamp old man Spencer got off the car and cried out several times, 'Come, Dickey.'

"In a few minutes the alligator was seen swimming down a little stream which runs through the swamp. When he reached us he came out of the water. One of the men gave him some meat and cheese, and the alligator ate it out of his hands. As soon as he was given the food he returned to the water. He was about nine feet long. None of the men knew who had trained him or where he had originally come from."

"Some of the men said that Dick is a charming companion when his visitors do not go in numbers. When two or three go to see him he goes out on the bank and is really sociable. I was told that there used to be three of the trained alligators. One of them was shot by mistake and the other disappeared. Dick is the last of the three, and is very likely to live for many years as far as danger of being shot is concerned, as every stranger is warned not to shoot him under penalty of the displeasure of the whole parish."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

His One Loss.
Some of the skaters on the London Serpentine hire their skates from men whose business it is to let them out at a certain sum per hour.

Thackeray once asked one of these men whether he had ever lost a pair through the omission to exact a deposit, and he replied that he had never done so except on one occasion, when the circumstances made it almost pardonable.

A well-dressed young fellow was having his second skate fastened on, when he suddenly broke away from the man's hands and dashed on to the ice.

The next instance a thick-set, powerful man was clamoring for another pair. "I shall nab him now," he cried, "for I am a dab at skating."

He was a sheriff's officer in pursuit of his prey, and a very animating sight it was to watch the chase. The officer was, as he had boasted, a first-rate skater, and it became presently obvious that he was running down his man. Then the young fellow determined to take a desperate risk for liberty.

The ice, as usual, under the bridge was marked "dangerous," and he made for it at headlong speed. The ice bent beneath his weight, but he got safely over. The sheriff's officer followed, with equal pluck, but being a heavier man broke through and was drowned.

"His skates," said the narrator of the incident, "I got back after the inquest, but those the young man had on I never saw again."

Cowardice of Sharks.
Many tales have been told of how human beings have been devoured by the fish that is known as the man-eater. Although many of these have been greatly exaggerated, they are to a certain extent true. It is also true that sharks have been known to follow a ship for days, picking up and eating that which had been thrown overboard as waste.

Notwithstanding all of this the cowardliness of sharks is well known among men who have been much to sea in southern waters. The fiercest shark will get out of the way of a swimmer if the latter sets up a noisy splashing.

A shark fears anything that splashes in the water. Among the South Sea Islands the natives never go bathing alone, but always in parties of half a dozen or so, in order that they may make a great hubbub in the water and thus frighten away the sharks. Once in a while a too venturesome swimmer among these natives foolishly detaches himself from his party and forgets to keep up his splashing. Then there is a swish and the man-eater comes up from under him like a flash, and he is gone.

Poverty in Rural Russia.
It is in Russia's most fertile districts that the worst famines occur, for famine—a little one every year, a big one every seven years—has now become a regular occurrence. And the country, as one flies across it, leaves the general impression of indigence. In sharp and painful contrast with Western Europe there are virtually no fat stockyards, no cozy farm house, no chateau of the local landowner, no squire's hall—pitiful assemblages of men and women just on the hither side of the starvation line.—Scribner's Magazine.

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